



Christian Courier

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Christian community shows hogbarn love after accident



Rebuilding: from left, Curtis Korvers works on a feeder, Dick Cook, Ian Saathof and Tony Van Ee (Everett's brother) put in piping, and John Ouwerkerk helps out.

James Kwantes

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — A month ago, Kathy Van Ee's world seemed to be falling apart. On Sept. 15, a near-fatal accident on the family's Abbotsford Hog farm put her husband, Everett, in a coma with a serious brain injury after the dump truck he was driving plunged down a 100-foot ravine.

Days later, Kathy Van Ee discovered that the family's insurance company would not pay the last half of a fire insurance claim if a barn under construction — which did not yet have a roof or penning equipment — was not finished by a Sept. 27 deadline.

In reply to Van Ee's desperate call for help, an army of volunteers from area churches and

the local Christian school where Kathy used to teach responded.

Today, the barn is nearing completion, Everett's condition is improving slightly, and Kathy is moving forward — with a lot of prayer and the support of friends in the Christian community.

"I've felt stress to the nth degree, but I've never felt like I was carrying the burden

myself," she says. Since the accident, the family has been flooded with cards and offers of support from the Christian Reformed community, other churches, the Christian school community and the rural community where the Van Ees live.

The Van Ees have a seven-year-old daughter, Charlene, a three-year-old son, Ethan, and Kathy is pregnant with the couple's third child, scheduled to arrive in March. The children haven't seen their dad since his accident. Kathy is torn as to whether to take Charlene to see Everett when he's in this condition.

"He kind of looks like a corpse with all these breathing and feeding gadgets on him," she says.

Everett was recently taken out of intensive care and is

beginning to respond to people. When Kathy visits him, he squeezes her hand harder when she talks about Charlene and Ethan and when it's time for her to leave. He remains on intravenus and breathes with the

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Interfaith coalition criticizes Harris government cutbacks

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Many Ontario groups are protesting the Harris government's sweeping cutbacks to government and social services. One, the Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition (ISARC), is asking the government to put further cutbacks on hold until an impact study can be done.

ISARC is a coalition that

deals with and speaks out on social policy issues. Its members represent Ontario's Roman Catholic, Anglican, United, Lutheran and Presbyterian churches as well as Buddhist and Jewish communities and social action groups such as Citizens for Public Justice.

In late September, ISARC sent a letter to Harris sharply criticizing his government's recent cutbacks. "The shocking

decision of your government to capriciously impose a 21.6 per cent cut on those forced to rely on social assistance, particularly 600,000 women and children, leaves us no alternative but to unequivocally reject these insensitive and heartless policies which will be divisive for communities across this province," the letter states. "We are calling on people of faith and good will

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News

Hundreds of volunteers help Abbotsford family

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help of a tracheostomy. Doctors expect him to be in the hospital for six months and in rehabilitation for one-and-a-half to two years.

"The Lord has carried us incredibly," says Van Ee, who called two prayer chains immediately after phoning 911 to report her husband's accident. "Without a Christian community, I don't know how people could do it."

Hundreds of volunteers donated time and materials to the construction of the hog barn. On one Saturday, over 100 volunteers came to help finish the barn. The insurance company eventually extended the deadline for completion, but only after workers had torn feeding systems and other equipment out of other barns on the farm in a scramble to meet

the deadline. Volunteers are still working at the farm.

A gift of love

Those who know Everett say they're not surprised so many people pitched in to help the Van Ees after Everett had the accident. He's a well-known personality in the Christian Reformed community in Abbotsford and beyond. He's been involved in M2/W2 and he runs a theatre troupe called Direction 470, which performs a humorous play every year that always proves to be a popular hit. Everett is also a deacon at Second Christian Reformed Church in Abbotsford.

"One of our bankers told me that Everett's gift is that so many people love him," says Kathy.

Keith Brandsma, a college student and part-time employee

at the farm, says he enjoyed working with Everett on the farm all summer.

"He was always telling jokes and he could really connect with his employees," he says. Brandsma said Everett, who has an education degree, also helped him with school assignments.

"Everett's helped a lot of people. He gave so many people a job in the summer," says Brandsma, describing Van Ee as a "great guy to work for."

"We really feel bad about the whole thing."

I wouldn't do this for anybody else

Many of the farm's former employees also helped the Van Ees get their barn ready for sows.

"I don't think I'd do this for any other employer," said

volunteer Tim Hogeterp, a former employee who worked at the hog farm for one and a half years. Hogeterp — now a greenhouse maintenance worker — spent his holidays helping out at his old place of employment.

It's not the first time a tragic accident has struck the Van Ee family. In the early 1980s, days after Kathy and Everett got married, Everett's brother Tony was involved in a serious car accident in Abbotsford. A stroke shortly after the accident put Tony in the hospital with a coma for 11 days and temporarily paralysed the right side of his body. After suffering brain damage in the stroke, he had to re-learn much of what he'd been taught in school.

Everett and Kathy moved from Saskatchewan to B.C. to be closer to Everett's brother.

Ironically, Kathy was the person who tutored Tony in math, English and other subjects, playing a crucial role in helping him get back on his feet again.

"I had made it on the honor roll in Grade 11, but after that I couldn't pass Grade 6," says Tony. "Kathy gave me the one-on-one teaching that I needed."

Tony is now helping run the farm in the absence of his brother.

Kathy says she has faith the Lord will bring the family through this trying time. She believes her experience working in a psychiatric hospital for people with head injuries and helping her brother-in-law Tony will help her deal with Everett's injury.

"I really think the Lord prepares you for the events that are going to happen," she said.

'Slash and burn approach' hurts poor, says coalition

...continued from page 1

to reject policies of tax cuts that will see average families have an extra dollar a day at the expense of our neighbors who will be forced to go hungry."

ISARC is calling on the Harris government to stop cuts to social assistance until the government can ensure that the cuts will not increase poverty. ISARC is concerned that the government has not considered the impact of cutbacks on local communities.

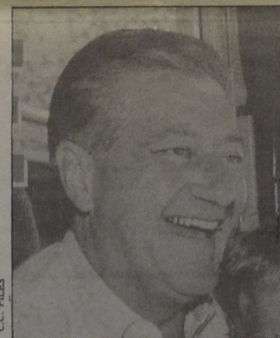
"This kind of policy by the Harris government encourages dumping on poor people," says Brother Michael Maher, co-ordinator of ISARC.

ISARC is especially concerned about cuts to social assistance and subsidized housing, he says, referring to

these as "the slash and burn approach."

Since the government started its cutbacks last summer, churches have been responding to "panic situations" of people on welfare, says Maher. Churches and other community groups will try to meet people's needs, but their resources and volunteers are already stretched, and they are still facing a drain on resources from previous cuts to government services, he adds.

"Now you have people facing really substantial loss of income," says Maher, referring to the 21.6 per cent cut to welfare. Under Harris government regulations, even if welfare recipients find part-time work, 75 per cent of it will be "clawed back" by the government, he says. It is "bare-faced stupidity"



Mike Harris

for the government to expect a single mother to find a babysitter so that she can work part-time, and then lose most of her money back to the government.

Another objection Maher has is that recent cutbacks "happened without parliamentary debate or approval.... This is not a democratic exercise." Many cuts were announced by the government while the legislature was not in session.

ISARC has tried to speak with Harris directly. "We talked to Harris prior to his election," says Maher. But when ISARC sent a letter to Harris in September, there was no response. "We're not too optimistic that we're going to get an answer," commented Maher.

When the previous NDP

government was in power, ISARC met with Bob Rae three times to discuss its concerns. "Fiscal responsibility was an ongoing issue" in these talks, says Maher. ISARC objected to the NDP's allowance of deferred tax payments by major companies, and emphasized to the Rae government that debt should not be the universal factor in forming government policy.

The meaning

In its September 27 throne speech, the Ontario government announced that it plans to continue to adjust social assistance rates so that "on average they are 10 per cent higher than the average of the other nine provinces."

"We raised concern about the 10 per cent business," comments Maher. Because welfare payments change all the time in the other provinces, "10 per cent above the average has no meaning whatsoever," he says. Maher adds that most welfare recipients in Ontario live in large urban areas, where the cost of living is higher than other parts of Canada.

God sense

ISARC is also concerned that the government might remove rent controls and change subsidized housing so that people

receiving social assistance might have to pay rent directly to landlords. At this point, ISARC is "trying to develop a comprehensive picture of what the cuts will do," says Maher. On November 2, ISARC will be holding a briefing session for religious leaders at Yorkminster Park Baptist Church in Toronto called "Common Sense, God Sense." This is a variation on the "Common Sense Revolution," which was a key concept in Harris's election campaign.

In the throne speech, the Ontario government announced plans to continue spending cuts begun last July with the goal of balancing the provincial government by the year 2000. This year alone, the government plans to cut \$1.9 billion in government spending.

The speech also announced that during this session, "the new government will begin to require able-bodied welfare recipients, except single parents with young children, to perform community service or enrol in work or training programs in exchange for their benefits. Those who refuse to participate will lose their benefits."

But the government emphasizes that welfare benefits for seniors, persons with disabilities and their families will not be reduced.



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When the 'rights of the people' override a constitution

Like most Western countries, Canada claims to be a constitutional democracy. Until the present century, democracy had a bad name in most places because it carried connotations of mob rule or majoritarian tyranny. Indeed, in a pure democracy the will of the people is permitted to determine public policy without limitations. Yet out of an acknowledged need to protect the rights of individuals and minorities, most democratic countries have adopted written constitutions limiting the powers of majorities to legislate at will.

However, two recent developments could endanger the constitutional nature of Canada's political system. First, Newfoundland's Premier Clyde Wells won a partial victory last month in a referendum approving the abolition of that province's historic church-run school systems in favor of a single public system. The victory was partial be-

cause only 51.9 per cent of those eligible bothered to vote at all, and of that proportion only 52 per cent voted in favor of Wells' proposal.

But even if every voter had turned out and the measure had passed by a wider margin, there is something discomfiting in the ability of a government to go to the people to override a constitutional right it no longer finds convenient to guarantee. In this case, the government decided that the need to be fiscally responsible took priority over the rights guaranteed the churches in the Terms of Union of 1949.

The second development took place next door in Quebec. Former separatist-turned-federalist Guy Bertrand went to the province's Superior Court requesting an injunction against the upcoming referendum on sovereignty. Bertrand argued that the referendum is unconstitutional because it permits the National Assembly to separate unilaterally from Canada, thereby denying him his rights as a Canadian citizen.

Remarkably, Justice Robert Lesage agreed with Bertrand's reasoning but declined, all the same, to grant the injunction, stating that the people of Quebec "want to express themselves" and to decide their own political future.

Lesage probably made the only decision possible under the current political climate. Halting the referendum on legal grounds would have been all but unimaginable, given the twin beliefs of most Quebecois that they constitute a nation and that nations have a right to self-determination. But once again, it is disturbing to be told by a court justice, sworn to uphold the law, that the democratic will of a majority takes precedence over those rights explicitly guaranteed in our constitution acts.

Reasserting pluralism

Not only do both these developments herald an erosion of constitutional government; they also represent a weakening of respect for pluralism. A large part of a government's norma-

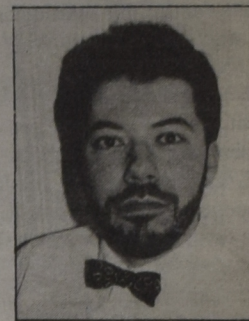
tive task is to protect the legitimate diversity of institutions, confessions and other forms of community from encroachment by individuals, additional communities, democratic majorities and, ultimately, the state itself.

Newfoundland's referendum was sponsored by a government which recognizes few limitations on democracy. Quebec's referendum is more complex. The fact that so many Quebecois wish to separate is testimony to a long history of majoritarian tyranny exercised by English Canada over French Canada since 1759. Yet now would-be separatists are themselves prepared to ignore the wishes of perhaps 49 per cent of Quebecois if the "yes" campaign wins by a small margin — which at this point looks unlikely. In short, one majoritarian tyranny tends to produce another.

Now may be a good time to reassert a pluralistic vision of Canada — of a country where

POLITICS

David Koyzis



French and English, Cree and Inuit, Catholics and Pentecostals are fully respected and their rights upheld by the political system.

David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Woven wristbands help Salvadoran women put food on tables

Pauline Martin

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador — On a recent trip to the town of Guarjila, in a region hard hit during El Salvador's civil war, I saw clearly the connection between food on the table and handicrafts.

In Guarjila today, "a lot of positive things are happening, like beginning a health clinic and a school," says Rich Howard-Willms, manager of Plowsharing Crafts in St. Louis, Mo., who recently visited El Salvador on a learning tour sponsored by SELFHELP Crafts of the World.

Money to eat

The town has built a plaza of three buildings for craft workers — including a women's weaving group. This year SELFHELP Crafts gave the women weavers their largest order ever — for 1,600 woven wristbands with leather detailing. Each woman wove 32 long strips on a wall frame; each strip produced five or six wristbands.

The order resulted in 22 days of work, for which each woman earned about \$59 Cdn., a decent sum in the countryside.

"The day after we were paid I went into town and bought soap, milk, rice and other food. The money is already spent — and eaten, with five children in the house," Julia told me. She is

a mother of three who has just taken in two orphaned nieces.

Salvadorans eke out a basic crop of corn and beans on poor farmland. If these women can continue to earn even periodic

income, they can better feed their children, who will in turn stay healthier and do better in school. These children will be better prepared to build strong communities in a country still recovering from painful civil war.

SELFHELP Crafts is a non-profit marketing program that provides fair income to Third World artisans. "Many SELFHELP Crafts producers are in similar situations to the Guarjila weavers group," says Doug Dirks, SELFHELP

producer relations director. "Almost all the income they earn from craft production is used to purchase food and provide for their children's education and basic health care. Purchasing SELFHELP Crafts products directly supports families like Julia's."

Pauline Martin works for the Mennonite Central Committee in El Salvador.

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Editorials

Comfort me with apples and with peaches

I remember being at a meeting of a classis which had to deal with the irregular behavior of one of its pastors. The majority of delegates present seemed to stress the reconciliation approach, when in my humble, or not so humble, opinion redress was called for. I asked myself why these delegates seemed so soft and unhelpful in this particular situation. Was it because they were thinking of Galatians 5 and the fruit of the Spirit?

When you read the list of spiritual fruit in Galatians 5, you do get an impression of meekness. It talks about love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. This is definitely soft fruit, the kind grown by the tender fruit producers of the Niagara peninsula and the Okanagan valley. These are the peaches and grapes of Christianity. If all Christians were to

focus exclusively on this fruit of the Spirit, there would never be enough iron in their blood to overturn tables in the temple.

There is another chapter

Fortunately, there are other passages in Scripture. A few pages further into the New Testament one can find Ephesians 6. In this chapter, Christians are urged to put on the full armor of God. Aha, I think, these delegates to classis are thinking of the wrong chapter in the wrong book. Instead of working out of Galatians 5, they should be applying Ephesians 6.

Ephesians 6 talks about struggle and taking a stand against evil. Here there's talk of the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit. These are the hard fruit of discipleship. How d'you like them apples?

Difficult to separate

But a little voice inside tells me that it's not always easy to know when to resort to Galatians 5 and when to go to Ephesians 6. One could say that the soft fruit is intended for fellow human beings, and the hard fruit for principalities and powers. And that's very helpful as a starting point. We are indeed called upon to fight the devil's schemes with great gusto, while being very patient and gentle with people. But often these two cannot be cleanly dissected.

When Jesus says to Peter, "Get behind me,

Satan," he is, in fact, addressing the principality of hell, not a prince of the church named Peter. But I'm sure that Peter felt rebuked. Experience tells us that people often take personally someone else's attempt at fighting evil within them. But we also know from experience that people who want to fight evil don't mind taking a few swipes at the person while they're at it. There's a world of difference between saying to someone, "What you just said is very hurtful," or saying "I could expect such infantile behavior from you."

A time for everything

The adage "hate the sin and love the sinner" sounds nice, but it takes a lot of soul-searching discipline to make it work. It falls roughly into the same category as "this hurts me more than it hurts you." Children have a hard time believing that!

But difficult though it may be, we must make an attempt to strategically decide when to apply the gentle qualities of Galatians 5 to a situation and when to resort to the spiritual weapons of Ephesians 6. There are times when forgiveness should be stressed and there are times when incisive action and rebuke are in place. And there may be times when both are in order.

The biblical quality of wisdom is needed to know the season for either. If we don't have that wisdom, we can do a lot of damage one way or the other. **BW**

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The referendum debate falls under the shadow of idols

The thing that bothers us most about the referendum debate in Quebec is the emphasis placed by both the Yes side and the No side on the economic advantages or disadvantages of Quebec staying in Canada. Perhaps we're a bit romantic about national unity, but we like to think of it as a marriage. Using that image, can you imagine a husband and wife debating the merits of their union in terms of finances? If that's all that binds people together, the union is not worth preserving.

In actuality, there is more to the union, even for most Quebecers. A recent poll shows that the majority of people in *la belle province* feel a strong attachment to Canada. One politician put it this way, inside Canada we are Quebecers, outside, we are Canadians.

If that is so, why this latest push for sovereignty?

It's the result of the influence of passionate nationalists who persist in telling Quebecers that deep down they would rather be independent. Such persuasion comes with the

usual amount of slanted information and misinformation.

What the separatists are really appealing to is the general dissatisfaction in Quebec with federalism and with Ottawa. But Ottawa is not the same as Canada. And as far as dislike of the federal system is concerned, most Westerners share that feeling with Quebecers. But somehow Westerners have never confused that dislike for a system with their feelings for Canada.

It's only fair to acknowledge an important difference between Quebec and the rest of Canada, of course. Quebec can throw its dislike of having been conquered 235 years ago into the hopper, as well as its separate identity that comes with a different language and culture.

It's not the desire for a separate existence as a country that we oppose as such. Rather, what we deplore is the manipulation of Quebecers by their politicians. There is no biblical reason for saying that Quebec should stay or leave, other than that people should not make an idol of economics or nationalism. **BW**

Letters

Can a majority overrule others' consciences?

I read with interest Rev. Van Schepen's article entitled "Did the Christian Reformed Church break the impasse on women in office?" (Sept. 8, 1995). "And the debate about it is not over yet," he concludes. "But," he asks: "Was anything accomplished?" He thinks so.

Well, that depends so much on the way you look at it. Church history tells us that in February 1887 there was in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, a meeting of the provincial church board of the Dutch Reformed Church in Friesland. Arie Elshout, elder in Lollum, was one of its members. Besides other matters they had to deal with the church of Hilaard, which had severed its ties with the denomination. And therefore a motion was made to hold that congregation's minister, Rev. Sikkels, and all his elders responsible for such an action and discipline those officebearers by removing them from office.

Against this, Elshout strongly protested. They had been forced to choose between God's Word and the regulations of the church, he argued. Thus they actually had no choice but to go by the inspired Word! And therefore, said Elshout, his conscience forbade him, should this motion pass, to bear any responsibility for it as a board member and he would be compelled to resign.

The answer he got was: We cannot go by brother Elshout's conscience; we have to follow the rules of the church!

That was in those days the way the Dutch Reformed Church (the state church), with its liberal majority, operated. Conscientious objections were simply overruled, with many deplorable results.

This year the Christian Reformed synod had to make an important decision about ordaining women. Harsh words such as those used in 1887, I assume, were never used.

And from the report, we gather that a real effort was made to find a solution with which everyone could be at rest. Thank God. And a final decision was not made either; only a temporary one. Nevertheless, the fact is that the principal objections which a large part of our membership have against this temporal decision were overruled by synod in its final vote!

This again raises this question: Can a majority just overrule conscientious or principal objections like that? Isn't that a repetition of what happened a century ago? And isn't this in conflict with Paul's admonitions in Romans 14?

In that chapter the Apostle deals with those fellow believers who had principal objections against eating meat that likely came from idol worship. Paul himself had no objections against it. "As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean" (vs.14),

he said. And then he adds: "If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died" (vs.15).

A lot more can be said about this whole issue, which has caused already so much disruption, heartache, grief and pain (and still may cause more of it). But

don't we, before we go any farther, have to first take into serious consideration the guidelines and instructions the Apostle gives us in Romans 14? — for they come straight from the Word of God.

Foppe De Jong
Woodstock, Ont.

Each one gain one subscriber

The hard times being faced by *Christian Courier* and its support system is enough to make one weep, considering what a fine paper it is and how desperately it is needed to maintain and strengthen our Reformed community and way of life. I could write pages on this theme.

There likely are several things that could be done to buck up the subscription list of CC, but I would suggest a way that, if seriously pursued, will solve the problem. It is this. Let every one of us who subscribes to CC go out and find a person who does not and work till a

new subscriber emerges. It is as simple as *Each One Gain One*. That surely would not be impossible.

This could be linked with a gift subscription effort. Think of all the times we are frustrated about what gift we'll give for a birthday, or Christmas, often ending up with spending a lot of money for things of marginal value. How much better to join the effort to save this witness for a Reformed way of life in our communities and in our world.

Let's go for it!

Tymen E. Hofman
Grand Rapids, Mich.

CC is important to this Canadian in England

We received the following too late to put into our 50th Anniversary issue but will share it with you now. It came in response to a short questionnaire which Marian Van Til sent to our overseas subscribers.

Sorry this is so late, but I have been in Canada for a long holiday. You probably won't get this in time, but I wanted to respond anyway.

I am a Canadian — a nursing instructor — who lives in England; my husband is English. I find *Christian Courier* to be a good source of news regarding the CRC, and it keeps me informed of some of the churches I have belonged to in the past. I enjoy the articles.

Do not change for the sake of change, or to make the CRC more "attractive," but keep to the reasons for being there in the first place, as stated in each issue. (I do think CRC members could be better informed about other denominations.)

Receiving CC is very important to me. I enjoy the challenge it offers and I thank all of you.

Ebeline Zee-Hawtin
Southrop, Gloucestershire

Give us your best shot



Hilda Born of Abbotsford, B.C., sent us this captivating picture of her twin grandsons, Jackson and Tyler Born, playing their mouth organs. One wonders whether the music coming from their instruments matches in harmony the music radiating from their eyes.

Social welfare in Confederation Canada

Those who want to negatively compare the budget-cutting '90s with yesterday do well not to move too far into the past. Historian Desmond Morton reminds us in his book *A Short History of Canada* that social welfare in Confederation Canada was pretty negligible. He writes: "Those responsible for municipal relief did their best to make sure that any applicant had first considered starvation as a serious alternative."

John Cabbot
Montreal

Correction

We inadvertently replaced the word "population" in the original manuscript of Vern Gleddie's column for the Sept. 8 issue with the word "production". The first sentence of the second paragraph should read: "Furthermore, governments reflect the ignorance and even callous disregard of the larger population toward agriculture."

In memory of Rev. Geuzebroek

Lammert Slofstra

Our friend Jacob Geuzebroek has been called home by the Lord whom he loved and by whom he was loved.

As a minister he wanted to proclaim Jesus Christ in every sermon on any Bible text, convinced, as he was, that he had no other mandate but to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. I often heard him express his concern when he heard sermons or meditations in which the Word of God came across only as a guide for moral issues.

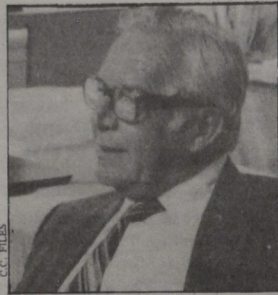
A good shepherd

His other great concern was to be a shepherd. Many people remember him for his warm love for his parishioners and his sincere desire to help them see Jesus's love in the midst of the storms in their lives.

The people in Appelscha, the Netherlands, and Juliana Ziekenhuis in Amsterdam, where he was a hospital chaplain for six years, the people from Wel-landport, Barrie, Scarborough, Kingston, Niagara Falls and Port Perry, Ont., can testify that Jacob Geuzebroek was a pastor who deeply cared.

Even after his retirement he was a great blessing to many when he was able to return for a while to the work that had the love of his heart: the hospital ministry in Toronto.

As may be expected of a pastor, the church at large and his



Jacob Geuzebroek

own denomination occupied a large place in his heart and mind. Yet while faithfully sticking to the biblical and traditional concepts of ministry, his outlook and concern for the church reflected an open and progressive mind. He was not afraid to give account of his opinions if and when he saw church leaders wanting to keep the church harnessed to traditions, especially when these traditions were wrongly proclaimed as gospel truth.

What a warm-hearted man he was! And how outspoken he could be! Many readers of *Christian Courier* may remember his articles on church issues. Many may especially remember the pastoral concerns he expressed when he wrote about his experiences in his beloved hospital ministry.

The CC staff remembers his interest in *Calvinist Contact*; he was for many years their friend-

ly advisor. How deep was his concern that we continue to receive guidance from a Reformed Christian viewpoint.

What more can we say about our friend Jacob? Should we relate all the work he has done for the church and for Christian schools, at synods, ecclesiastical boards and committees? In my mind I hear his booming bass voice calling me to order: "Give glory to God."

Yes, we give glory to God for this pastor and friend. He'll be sorely missed by his beloved wife, Maria, to whom he was married for almost 51 years, and by his four sons, daughters-in-law and grandchildren. He'll be missed by the listeners to "Zingend Geloven." He'll be missed by the readers of *Christian Courier*. He'll be missed by many other friends.

It was a shock when we heard the sad news, that at age 78 Jacob Geuzebroek had passed away. We had been concerned about his health for many years as his long time struggle with kidney disease began to take its toll. Yet in the end an aortic aneurysm took his life.

But those are words of human reflection. In the end, the Lord took his life, locked him into his everlasting arms and is now taking care of him forever.

Lammert Slofstra is a retired Christian Reformed pastor who lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

Global stewardship starts at home

John McMillan saw hunger in Japan after World War II. He told me that as a teenager, "I hated it, and it made me angry to see people suffer." This iconoclast busi-

nessman/professor has since travelled the world putting money to the problem. My own parents were part of the occupation, and they saw hunger too. A proud people were reduced to scraping out the garbage cans of the victors. However, a few gloated in this humiliation and gleefully mixed table scraps and other wastes together to humiliate the defeated foe.

Years later my mother taught me a global stewardship lesson from this pain. Although under orders not to feed the civilian population at that time, compassion won out in another way. Some military wives carefully wrapped table scraps and other usable items to set beside the garbage cans each night. A small gesture? Sure, but not unnoticed among the pain of enemies.

Failing the stewards' trust

War is often an enormous violation of our stewards' trust. It is at best a blunt club to restore justice and it wastes precious human life and the wealth of creation. Global stewards should be peacemakers, whenever we can be so. I admire the Canadian record of peacemaking. While far from spotless, this country has much to be proud of on this score. But few of us can start or stop a war with a pen stroke or a word. Our impacts on the creation are measured in vanishingly small bits. And here lies a fallacy that can lull us to sleep.

I seldom think of myself as a rich man. Each spring Revenue Canada reminds me of that fact! Yet this comparison doesn't take into account that everyday I shop all over the world without ever leaving Edmonton. What responsibility do I have to the poor and needy in these lands that support me? In the hunger spots of the world the messier side of our global market comes to light — a side we seldom see in our supermarkets. The reasons are complex, but that does not excuse me. I have been hearing solutions offered for these problems for almost 30 years, yet the poor are more numerous and the gap between us wider than ever. I can't solve these problems myself, but I share John McMillan's frustration. I know that as a steward I am called to do something. But what?

Giving in secret

North Americans are among the 20 per cent of richest people in the world who command 64 per cent of the world's resources. If we are simply pressed into the over-consuming mold of our culture we sin against humanity and the rest of creation. There are consequences to gluttony and greed, so why are we so slow to recognize this?

Perhaps we stewards need to learn to hate the hunger and other environmental degradation our sin has brought the world. But our own economic difficulties press us daily (though they pale in comparison to others' in the world). It is hard for us to hear the needs of our hired help in other countries. We need to repent and change our ways. Jesus said (Matt. 6:1-4) that when we give to the needy we should do so in secret. Perhaps we can disguise our acts of kindness by reducing our demands on the earth for luxury products. Global stewardship can begin right in our kitchen.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College in Edmonton.



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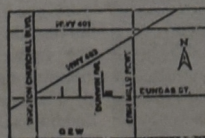
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Book Review

Media/Arts

Where do Christians turn in physical or mental need?

Supporting the Weak: Christian Counselling and Contemporary Psychiatry

Healing at Any Price?: The Hidden Dangers of Alternative Medicine.

Both books by Samuel Pfeifer. London: Word U.K., 1995.

Reviewed by Gerry Denbok. Denbok worked at Family Christian Bookstore for 32 years, and for six years has been president of Christian Rainbows Fellowship of Southwestern Ontario, a support group for the long-term mentally ill, their families and friends.

These books were written to help us Christians when we must deal with either mental or physical pain. Their author, Dr. Samuel Pfeifer, is a Swiss psychiatrist and a Bible-believing Christian.

In *Supporting the Weak* Pfeifer observes something this reviewer also discovered some time ago: "That most books about pastoral care address themselves only to minor

problems, and give little help toward gaining a full understanding of schizophrenia and endogenous depression, of major neuroses or organic brain disorders."

If Christians want to effectively help people with psychiatric disorders "they need to gain a broader understanding of mental illnesses, how they affect people in general, and in particular, how they affect people's faith" (p. 11).

In a helpful chart Pfeifer shows treatment strategies related to problem severity. Chapter 5 gives an overview of neurotic disorders. Chapter 6 deals with anxiety, compulsion and hysteria. Chapter 7 discusses depression — it alone is worth the price of the book. Pfeifer includes helpful tables with criteria for the diagnosis of severe, as well as mild and moderate depression.

He says mild depression can, among other things, be understood "as an alarm: STOP! You are overdoing it! You are expecting too much of yourself" (p. 114). It is possible to do without medication in mild depressions, he says, but a doctor should always be consulted in more severe situations.

There is a beautiful chapter

entitled "Living With Limitations." Pfeifer writes: "Even Christians are affected by the power-crazed attitude of our time: healing is the only valid sign of genuine faith, and only signs and wonders reflect the work of God. It is the spectacular successes which hit the headlines, not the patiently born suffering in homes of the chronically sick" (p. 195).

And further: "Even today, God meets people as he once met discouraged Elijah, not so much in the tempest of a great meeting, as in the soft breeze of a gradual healing in stillness."

Supporting the Weak stands head and shoulders above other works I have seen on this subject (with the notable exception of Dr. John White's book *The Masks of Melancholy*). Pfeifer's book is readable, professionally up-to-date and written in a compassionate style.

Careful assessment of alternative medicine

Pfeifer's other book, *Healing at Any Price*, discusses physical healing. The author admits he was initially swept away by the increasingly popular "holistic health" approach. But as time went on he began to feel that some of its philosophical over-

tones could not be ignored, so he began his own research.

He read every available publication on the subject and interviewed patients, acupuncturists, homeopaths, herbologists and parapsychologists. This book is a result of his investigations.

Pfeifer does not deny the failings of modern (mainstream) medicine. But he also questions the non-critical approach many (including many Christians) take to the "bio" boom, iridology and even the "mysterious phenomena."

Incidentally, Pfeifer studied medicine in Switzerland and psychiatry in the United States. He is head physician of a psychiatric clinic in Basel.

In the foreword Selwyn Hughes writes: "Dr. Samuel

Pfeifer has come to our assistance with a book which ... is destined to become one of the most informative books on the subject of alternative medicine that has yet been written. As a minister and a counsellor I have longed for some time to be able to put into the hands of those who write me with questions concerning the subject of alternative medicine, a book that would give them the perspective they need. Although there are many fine articles, features and booklets on various aspects of this subject written by committed Christians, I know of nothing that compares in the depth and treatment which Dr. Pfeifer has given to the issue."

I would agree with that assessment.

Magazine monitors teens' music for parents

LOS ANGELES, Calif. (EP) — A record company executive has launched a new magazine that analyzes popular music and rates its content. *Music Monitor* premiered Sept. 1. It includes advisory ratings for songs, letting parents know about offensive elements such as sex, violence, drugs and language. The magazine also summarizes the lyrics of songs and explains slang terms which may not be familiar to parents. Founder and managing editor Charlie Gilreath says the magazine is not an effort to promote censorship, but to give parents the information they need to help their children make wise decisions. A one-year subscription costs \$36 US.

Canadian design is showcased in overseas exhibition

BUDAPEST, Hungary (Canadian Scene) — On September 15 in Budapest, Hungarians got a first glimpse of an exhibition of visual art created by Canadians entitled ART/DESIGN CANADA 2000. The show, which will proceed to Dresden, Germany, in December is intended to create greater awareness abroad of the quality of Canadian design in a variety of areas that affect everyday life — from coins to public parks, from theatrical costumes to buildings.

ART/DESIGN CANADA 2000 has been conceived and assembled by the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts (RCA) which has a membership of more than 500 men and women distinguished as exponents of the visual arts.

Academy president, architect Ernest Annau points out that increasing the profile of Canadian functional art and design in the European market will contribute to the image of Canada as a source of professional expertise.

The exhibition features the work of 21 members of the RCA and one guest artist. Many of the artists and designers are already known internationally.

Raymond Moriyama's design for the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo and Arthur Erickson's development of a West Coast style of architecture are typical examples of how architects can create habitable, functional buildings that are both striking in design and in harmony with the environment. Mayta Markson's ceramics are designed for personal daily use,

and Tamara Jaworska's fibre tapestries decorate public spaces and are seen by millions daily. Dora de Pedery Hunt's designs in metal include medals to commemorate special occasions and Queen Elizabeth's portrait on Canadian coins. Their work will be included in the exhibition.

The exhibition will stay in Budapest until November 15, then move on to Dresden from December 18 to February 18. A possible third venue in Karlsruhe, Germany, in April is under discussion as is Canada House in London. The exhibition will return to Canada in July, where it will be seen in Montreal and Toronto by both Canadians and many visitors and tourists.

Rhythmic recordings make lively Christmas gifts

AKRON, Pa. (MCC) — Two recent recordings by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) International young adult music troupes will make lively cross-cultural Christmas gifts this year.

A Youth Discovery Team with Colombia toured Colombia, B.C., and across the United States. A cassette of the team features Latin American music, mostly in Spanish.

A Youth Discovery Team with Zambia toured Zambia, Canada and the United States. A cassette tape or compact disc of the team features Southern Africa style music, with songs in English and African lan-

guages.

Both recordings include instrumental (especially percussion) accompaniment, as well as a capella singing.

Cost is \$7 Cdn/6 US for the cassette tape or compact disc. The price of the recording covers production costs only. Your additional contribution toward the costs of sponsoring the teams is welcome.

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Church

Bible society travels the information superhighway with age-old message

Dan Wooding

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — A veteran evangelist and the head of one of the world's oldest Bible societies has said that the Bible has to be accessible to a "post-literate cyberspace generation."

Dr. Lars B. Dunberg, president of the International Bible Society, founded in New York in 1809, says that more and more people today cannot or will not read the Bible. He made his remarks at the IBS international staff conference held Sept. 21-28 in Colorado Springs, Colo., for IBS leaders from 30 countries in Africa, Europe, Latin America, East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East and North America.

"Huge numbers of people today around the world are spending many hours each day browsing the 'Web' or talking with people 'on-line,' but they will not pick up any kind of book to read, especially the Bible," said Swedish-born Dr. Dunberg, who was involved in the merger of IBS with Living Bibles International some three

years ago. "So this is the challenge we all face today."

Dunberg, whose organization brought to the world the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible, has published the Scriptures in more than 560 languages and has distributed more than 350 million Scriptures throughout the world, went on to reveal, "We have now put the NIV on the World Wide Web and we now have a Web Page on the 'Net.' We are receiving thousands of inquiries a week from people all over the world who want to order Bibles and other materials online from us."

"It seems that many thousands of others are reading the Bible on-screen. We really don't mind 'how people read the Bible as long as they just do it!'"

Dunberg said that these kinds of challenges to Bible reading are not new. "When radio first came out, many people stopped reading God's Word to listen to the radio," he said. "Then television brought a similar situation. Now cyberspace is providing the same challenge

for those of us in Bible publishing and translation."

William Jefferson, senior vice president of international programs for IBS, then asserted that however the Bible is packaged "the future can never be unplugged from the Word of God."

He added, "Even though the NIV Bible is now on the 'superhighway' and the World Wide Web, we know that the age-old message of the Word of God will always be sufficient for the needs of all people as we prepare for this new millennium. Our challenge is to get people to read it and then apply it to their lives."

Rave parties in Holland

In other IBS news, Berno Ramaker, national director for IBS in the Netherlands, has pioneered an outreach to the infamous "rave parties" that have been sweeping through the Netherlands and elsewhere in Europe and have claimed the lives of some young people.

Along with friends from other ministries in the Nether-

lands, he first attended a huge three-day gathering in June 1994 where 25,000 young people "raved" and where all kinds of drugs were consumed. It was held on a beach near Rotterdam and Ramaker's group was able to hand out Bibles to those who would receive them.

IBS Nederland has now produced three tracts, one of which was written by a Dutch TV personality.

"We go to all of these 'rave'

parties and hand these tracts out and have already heard from several people who have asked to know more about God," said Ramaker. "Quite often, they are sick for days after the party and this gives them time to reflect on eternal matters." Those involved in this outreach are now organized in 24 local teams and go out many times per month. Besides handing out literature, they also provide food and drinks to these young people.

Tutu announces retirement

EAST LONDON, South Africa (EP) — Desmond Tutu, the Anglican Archbishop famous for his anti-apartheid stance, has announced that he will retire next June.

Tutu's media officer told Ecumenical News International that the Archbishop will leave Cape Town, South Africa, next year to spend some time on a sabbatical leave at Emory University in the U.S. He added that Tutu might then spend another year in the U.S., where he would serve at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C.

Tutu has also been mentioned as a possible leader of South Africa's official "Truth Commission," which will investigate human rights violations by both the former apartheid regime and the anti-apartheid liberation movement, but the archbishop has not been approached yet by officials, his spokesperson said.

Tutu has written a number of books and said he is planning to write a book about Christ's transfiguration.

Jews for Jesus leader responds to ouster of Messianic Jews

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. (EP) — The Jewish Community Relations Council of New York has declared "Hebrew Christians" to be "completely separate and disassociated from the Jewish community."

In a tersely-worded statement released Sept. 6, Dr. Philip D. Abramowitz accused Jewish believers of increasing efforts to "infiltrate and proselytize in Jewish establishments by concealing their Christian affiliation and agenda." Dr. Abramowitz, director of communal affairs and the Task Force on Missionaries and Cults of the Jewish Community Relations Council, further insisted that Hebrew Christianity is "not Jewish."

The letter was accompanied by a statement written by Dr. Lawrence H. Schiffman titled "Meeting the Challenge: Hebrew Christians and the Jewish Community." Schiffman asserted that Christianity and Judaism rest at opposite poles

of theology. He concludes that when Jews believe in Jesus, they "forfeit their privileges as Jews."

Being outcasts no surprise

Jews for Jesus executive director Dr. Moishe Rosen said the denunciation came as no surprise. "Those of us Jews who believe in Jesus always expected to be outcast," he said. "Perhaps greater measures are now being taken to ensure that we are regarded as outcasts because more and more Jewish people are willing to accept Christ."

Rosen said the release of the statement was an effort to let Jewish unbelievers know that if they become Christians they will be "disenfranchised and scorned" by the larger Jewish community.

Schiffman charged that Jewish believers disguise their evangelistic efforts and are deceptive in their use of sacred

symbols and the observance of traditional holidays. Schiffman called for Jewish Christians to be banned from membership in synagogues, excluded from Jewish cemeteries, and denied access to Jewish community centres.

"These despicable measures to prevent Jews from believing the gospel dramatize the cost, but they will not daunt spiritually hungry seekers," said Rosen. "No one ever followed God to become more popular or accepted by his or her own people."

Rosen rejected Schiffman's claim that Jewish Christians use deceptive evangelistic methods, and said his organization does not endorse such actions.

Jews for Jesus is an interdenominational evangelistic missionary society based in San Francisco. More than 100 missionaries and staff members work to share the gospel with Jewish unbelievers and others.

Meeting the 'right Christians'

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (EP) — Leaders of the National Baptist Convention, the U.S. largest black denomination, plan to register one million new black voters by the next presidential election in an effort to fight Christian conservatives. More than 4,000 members of the

denomination marched through Birmingham recently, singing hymns and calling for a commitment to civil rights era activism. "They claim to be the Christian right. I want them to get ready to meet the right Christians," said Rev. Al Sharpton of New York City.

Christian Coalition looking for Catholics

CHESAPEAKE, Va. (EP) — Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition is starting a new division in an effort to appeal to Roman Catholics. The Catholic Alliance will be led by Catholic laypersons and conduct activities aimed at Catholic voters. Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition, says he hopes the new group will boost his organization's Catholic mem-

bership from about 250,000 to at least a million by the end of the decade. The group at present has about 1.7 million supporters. Reed notes that Catholics and evangelicals can unite for greater impact around issues such as abortion, pornography, and private Christian education.

Church

Bishops mass-market Catholic catechism

OTTAWA (CCCB) — The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has signed a landmark agreement with Doubleday Canada Ltd. to distribute a mass-market edition of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This is the first time that a CCCB publication has been mass-marketed through trade bookstores.

The *Catechism*, originally released by Pope John Paul II in 1992, is the first summary of the Catholic Church's teachings to be issued since the Council of Trent in 1566. While its primary purpose is to advise bishops and teachers, the *Catechism* has become both an international and national best-seller, with sale totals of eight million worldwide and 150,000 in Canada. The CCCB Publication Service issued the first Canadian edition of the *Catechism* in French in 1992 and in English in 1994. To date, 90,000 English and 60,000 French copies of the \$19.95

book have been sold through specialty bookstores or by special order.

Popular demand led the CCCB to enter into the mass-marketing deal with Doubleday. "It is clear that the *Catechism* is of great interest to Catholics around the world," noted Most Rev. Raymond Lahey, Bishop of St. George's, Newfoundland, and member of the Episcopal Commission for Christian Education. To meet this need, the bishops sought a way to ensure the *Catechism* is as readily accessible as possible in Canada. Doubleday's distribution network and ability to offer the *Catechism* at a lower price should offer many more individuals the opportunity to read it.

The Doubleday paperback of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* will cost \$10.99 and has been available in major bookstores across Canada since late August.

Pope reaffirms stance against women as priests but not in other roles

VATICAN CITY (EP) — At the opening of the Fourth United Nations Conference on Women in Beijing, Pope John Paul II reaffirmed his opposition to women priests but encouraged the Catholic church to allow more female participation.

Sending greetings to the Beijing conference early in September, the Pope said he was willing to allow the presence of women at Diocesan Synods and in the Curia (Vatican Administration). He added that he was also open to allowing women to assist in "the care of parishes, in cases when there are not sufficient [male] clergy."

Women will still not be allowed to become priests, though, he added.

Restating his opposition to women priests, the Pope listed the many duties that women may fulfill. Women in the Catholic Church should be allowed to serve in any area that is not "inseparably linked" to

the priesthood, he said.

For instance, a woman acting as a "quasi-parish priest" could preach and baptize, but — on Sundays — a priest would perform communion.

How do we read 'The Book'?

We read the Bible as the Word of God. The Book was written by the Holy Spirit's inspiration; therefore it is the infallible rule for faith and life.

However, this is only the first half of our confession with respect to the Bible. This first half we share with all evangelicals, Orthodox and Roman Catholic denominations and with all sects that originated in the Christian church, such as Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses and even Mormons. All of these agree that the Bible is a God-inspired book.

The second half of our confession regarding the Bible is much more difficult to put into words. We must say how the Bible should be interpreted. We must carefully formulate what the *message* of the Bible is. For unless we do so, any person can use this holy Book as the basis for any kind of teaching.

Refusing life

The most crucial thing the Christian church must say about the interpretation of the Bible is that *Jesus is the key to the Scriptures*. A person and a denomination may be very diligent in studying the Scriptures and yet miss the point. For instance, there are Jewish rabbis who know the Old Testament by heart and there are ordinary Jehovah's Witnesses who study the Scriptures almost day and night. Yet Jesus would say to them: "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life" (John 5:39,40). Unless the study of the Bible leads the student to Jesus, the time was wasted.

The Scriptures are the "saving revelation of God in Christ" and this revelation "progressively unfolds" in the Bible. (The words in quotation marks were used by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in 1972). That does not mean that any and every verse in the Scriptures says something about salvation by God in Christ. It does mean that any teaching that's supposed to be based on the Bible but disregards this overall goal of the Scriptures has no binding authority.

An ear to hear

Many people like to believe that it is enough to say that the Bible is the Word of God. They become scared when you tell them that we have to *interpret* the Bible and that every part must be understood within the overall purpose (salvation history) of God. A suspicious look narrows their eyes and you can see them think: but it is *you* who are going to define the overall purpose of God! And I am afraid, the suspicious church member thinks, that you, professional theologian, are going to tell me what part of the Bible has, and what part does not have, divine authority.

I have much sympathy for that fear and I can understand the suspicion. Undoubtedly Bible interpretation has big risks. But without it one cannot hear God's voice. And it is far from true that one has to be a scholar to know the voice of the Shepherd as it comes to us through the 66 books that make up the Bible. But one must have an ear to hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

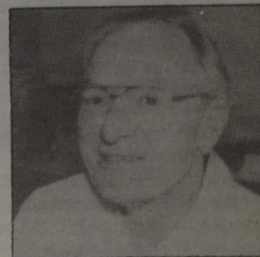
CRC Publications has just released a video by Andrew Kuyvenhoven on the topic of Bible interpretation. Though he is retired and now lives in Grand Rapids, Mich., Rev. Kuyvenhoven recently served the Lindsay, Ont. CRC for five consecutive Sundays, and, he says, after major heart problems earlier this year, he is "very thankful to be healthy again."

Andrew Kuyvenhoven

CHAPTER

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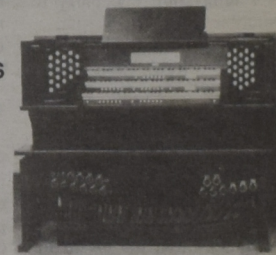
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Feature

Is the problem too much government?

The task of government and our Christian calling

During a lunch conversation about the recent Ontario election, a friend described her voting behavior figuratively in this way: She pressed the button, jumped back and covered her head in anticipation of the coming explosion.

Stephanie Baker Collins

The picture she conjured up seems an apt description of the strange mixture in politics today: the sense that dramatic change is needed, combined with uncertainty as to what that change ought to look like and what the consequences will be. Someone has dubbed this decade the "nervous '90s." Something new is emerging in Canada both economically and politically. Not only are we not able to see its shape as yet, but we are not convinced that it is something better.

We are in the midst of a significant rethinking of the role of government. What lessons, cautions and principles ought to guide us in this rethinking? Instead of covering our heads in anticipation of the political fall-out, can we renew our Christian calling in the political arena and work for transformation in the structures of society?

Our political mood

Politics in Canada has been characterized by wide swings in voter behavior. Governing parties are not just replaced, but trounced in elections. The media comments often on the anger and cynicism in the Canadian electorate. Are we simply an angry, cynical electorate bent on punishing whoever is in power when election time comes? Or is it that the choices which face us at election day do not allow us to express our deeper concerns with any precision, so we end up lurching from one party to another?

It seems clear that both descriptions hold some truth. First of all, we do display symptoms of an angry, frustrated public which has no time or patience for the complexity of problems that face government today. We want straight, simple answers even if they hide the fact that the problems are too complex for simple answers. It's too much to try to sort through the unintended impacts of policy changes which could be harmful for some sectors of the public.

The second aspect we want to recognize is a genuine desire to call government to accountability, and our frustration at the means available with which to do that.

A multitude of concerns

Canadians bring a number of concerns to the political arena: for many it is finding a way to put an end to deficit spending; for others it is a desire to improve government accountability; for some it is a belief that government has overstepped its bounds and we expect too much from it; and for others it is a perception that government isn't doing enough to tackle problems such as high unemployment and growing poverty.

Some interest groups want government to reduce its socio-economic functions, but to enhance its role as the protector of morality and values. Others call for government "neutrality" on moral issues, but for an enhanced role by government in the redistribution of wealth and opportunity.

Our inconsistency is a reflection of a pragmatic approach to government. Pragmatism doesn't require consistency. If our goal is economic prosperity, for example, and government is seen to be a useful partner in pursuing economic prosperity, we welcome their actions to boost the economy. If government comes to be seen as a hindrance to economic prosperity we demand they step back. Our approach often reflects our own priorities more than a consistent view of the role of government.

Too much government?

The popular slogan today is for smaller and smarter government. This is the primary solution offered for increasing government accountability. We can't deny that there are unavoidable pressures and legitimate concerns prompting us to rethink the role of government. What questions are helpful to us in doing that?

First of all, is downsizing an

effective way of calling government to accountability? Will we trust government more if it is smaller or at least has less money to spend? There are some important questions to ask ourselves about the assumptions behind this approach.

Should we assume, for example, that if government performs a task badly, it should therefore give that task to someone else, or simply stop doing it? If some aspects of environmental regulations are problematic does government remove itself from its role in protecting the environment?

In these situations what we really should be after is for government to do a better job in these areas of its jurisdiction. What is required then is not a simple solution of getting government out, but the more difficult task of reforming the

way government does its task.

Secondly, is smaller government closer to the community? If our desire is for enhanced community input, then the Canadian version of smaller government is not more community based. Unless government decides to exempt community activities or community planning from the cut-backs in spending, smaller government will mean less community input and community services as well.

Accommodating community input

Federal and provincial cut-backs have often meant the centralization of community offices into regional offices, the closing of community hospitals, the amalgamation of local school boards into regional ones.

This is not to say that community input requires big government. But community input requires an intentional structure that can accommodate that input, not just an assumption that smaller government is closer to the people. We need to ask what reforms would make input by citizen groups more meaningful and effective.

Direct democracy

Thirdly, is direct democracy a more effective way to voice our concerns to government? Many do not trust political parties or citizen groups to represent their views. They are attracted by the opportunity to register their individual view directly on any issue. Term limits, decisions by referendum, and voting by means of 1-800 phone lines are some contemporary tools of direct democracy.

There are two significant problems with direct democracy. First, decisions are based on the majority view point. There is no structural room for minority views. Secondly, direct democracy views the task of government as that of representing the majority view, regardless of the content of that view. Government is accountable to the people, not to biblical standards of justice. The problem we face is that size of government is not a very reliable guide for making judgments about the role of government. One reason is that it does not begin with the right question: What is the task or office of government?

James Skillen of the Association for Public Justice, writing on this topic recently, suggests a different direction. Skillen states:

The response to cynicism, after all, is for better government, not a smaller version of untrustworthy government.... The key is not to obtain less government but to get government to do what it ought to do.

The task that God has given government is to uphold justice.

Fair and equitable relations

Defined in general terms, justice requires that all God's creatures, and also communities and organizations should have fair and equitable relations with one another. Each within the



country must have the freedom and the access to resources which are rightfully theirs relative to others. The task of working toward this justice belongs to all of us as individuals and as organizations and institutions in society. We must each take up our calling in this area.

Public justice refers to that aspect of justice which is the responsibility of government. A Reformed perspective defines the task or office of government not first of all by its size, but by the public justice task God gives it in society. Government is one of a diversity of types of human responsibility and authority in social life.

Governments must be aware of the different needs of people, communities and organizations and balance their public claims so that each may have the freedom to fulfil their God-given calling. Part of the task of defining the role of government is the task of defining these multiple areas of human responsibility.

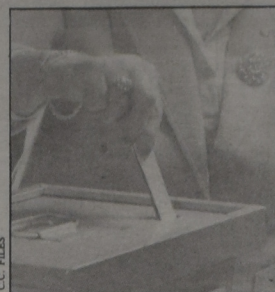
Let's look at family life, for example. Most Canadians are

concerned about the future of the family. That concern, however, takes different forms. Some groups focus primarily on family break-up, the negative influence of the media on the family, and the loss of moral values that once guided family life. Others decry the growing poverty among families and children, the increased work effort necessary to make ends meet, and the lack of time available for children as a result.

The jousting over priorities has distracted both groups from the question that neither one has answered. If our focus is on economic well-being of families, what is the public justice task of government in that area? If our focus is on nurturing family stability, what is the public justice task of government there? And what are the tasks of churches, schools, businesses, and families for family well-being?

Why aren't we asking the right questions about government? Perhaps because if we asked what it means for government to pursue public justice, we would have to examine the

spiritual motivation behind what we want from government. We would have to ask whether what we want from government conforms to God's requirement of justice or whether it serves our particular



agenda for government.

One barrier we face is that there is not much room in our highly polarized political climate for asking these questions. We live in a cantankerous time. In this atmosphere of fear and anxiety about the future, it becomes more acceptable to blame particular groups in society for our troubles. The Ekos Research Group found that the growing intolerance for

immigration in Canada is explained not so much by economic insecurity as by cultural insecurity, the fear that a vaguely defined "Canadian way of life" is disappearing.

The mood in the Christian community can also be a quarrelsome one. We save our most vehement critiques for each other. A recent Calvin and Hobbes cartoon featured a cryptic description of this mood. Calvin describes the fundraising letter he is writing with these words: "The secret to getting donations is to depict everyone who disagrees with you as the enemy. Then you explain how they're systematically working to destroy everything you hold dear. It's a war of values! Rational discussion is hopeless!" When Hobbes complains that this approach is "cynically unconstructive," Calvin replies, "Enmity sells."

Need 'a spirituality for the long haul'

As Christians we need to work to create the space politically where helpful discussions about the role of government

can take place. A helpful metaphor for our political witness in this climate may be that of a loyal opposition. The concept of a loyal opposition reflects two aspects of our work in the political arena. One aspect is that we are to challenge society, name the injustice that we see, and speak out for a new way of doing things. The second aspect is that we challenge society for society's sake. We do not adopt a stance of hopelessness about meaningful change.

We need what Joan Chittister calls "a spirituality for the long haul." We live in the between-times. We are not going to translate the life of Christ with anything like completeness into the institutions of the world. But we also know that the momentum of the day is not the measure of God's working in history. And God calls us to work for justice because that is one way that we demonstrate love for our neighbor.

Stephanie Baker Collins does research in social policy for Citizens for Public Justice. She lives in St. Catharines, Ont.

Big and bad government

John Hiemstra

Klein, Chretien, Harris, Manning and others propose to shrink government like an oversized wool sweater. Just throw government into the hot water of cutbacks and privatization, they promise, and it will "down-size" to automatically "fit" society.

Both the demand to shrink government and the proposed plans to remake government require careful attention from Christians. As citizens of God's Kingdom, we are also called "to seek the peace and prosperity of the city..." (Jer.29:7). To do this well, we need to start by asking why governments have grown so large in the 20th century.

Hardly anyone disagrees that the government is bigger than it used to be. The evidence is overwhelming. In 1991, Statistics Canada estimated that almost one in six Canadian workers were employed by a government or government agency. This year, 12 of the top 20 employers in Edmonton have been governments or related agencies, like hospitals and schools.

To complicate things, there are several governments ruling over us at the same time. The federal government, a provincial government, and a city or county government draw up laws for us to obey. International free trade treaties, military pacts and other agreements also regulate our activities. Add to this our local school and hospital boards, and a wide variety of administrative tribunals like labor boards and the CRTC. Even the Supreme Court of Canada is getting into the act, using the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to "make" laws for us.

Why governments grow

But how did government get so big? Not surprisingly, "experts" disagree on this question. Come puzzle with me.

*** Has Canadian government grown because our national population has mushroomed?** Increased numbers would account for some growth in government services over the decades, but certainly not for new types of programs which have been created.

*** Does the incentive struc-**

ture of bureaucracy make government grow? Bigger departmental budgets, increased personnel and expanded power are the signs of bureaucratic success. Administrators are not evil, so the saying goes, they simply respond to these natural incentives by pushing government to expand into new fields.

*** Is democracy the villain?** To be re-elected, democratic governments must cater to the electorate by providing expanded services, increased unemployment insurance, hospitals, pensions, roads, etc. In addition, interest groups use the democratic process to pressure governments to give them subsidies, e.g., for depressed agriculture or faltering fisheries.

*** Do governments grow because of societal differentiation?** Modern society is becoming more and more complex. We have moved from almost self-sufficient farms to cities with an array of complex new organizations and institutions. Government grows as it is required to legally integrate and regulate the complex interactions between these new ele-

ments in society. Can we get rid of this complexity?

*** Is the welfare-state ideology to blame?** This ideology accepts a free society but also sees the state as the final guarantor of human welfare "from cradle to grave." If an element of society fails, the ideology suggests, the state should step in to remedy the problem. Thus, we have developed policies such as Old Age Security and UIC.

*** Has the pursuit of Mammon misled Canadians into accepting all types of irresponsible government growth?** The last 25 years have witnessed a rash of irresponsible incentives, megaproject blunders, high interest rates, improper tax rates and deficit spending. The record shows that these contradicting policies were justified by the promise that they would increase economic growth.

*** Does private irresponsibility make government grow?** If too many husbands beat their wives, government grows when it must provide emergency shelters. When we

live wasteful consumer lifestyles, government is forced to develop landfills and blue box programs to clean up after us. If a company pollutes a work site and leaves, we take it for granted government will clean it up.

These explanations for big government weave a complex tapestry. There are threads of irresponsibility and sin woven together with natural threads of population growth and the unfolding of societal institutions. How can Christians weave new threads of grace through this tapestry?

Certainly not by blindly accepting the way secular society debates the size of government rather than its proper role in society. Trying to deal with government size without considering its God-given task is like ordering parents to spend less time in their families without knowing what God calls families to do.

Dr. John Hiemstra teaches political science at the King's University College in Edmonton.

Feature

The fatal patrol



The Bren group: from left to right, Ralph, John and Sikke.

John Hiemstra

It was August 17, 1947, four years before Indonesia would gain its independence from the Netherlands' colonial rule. Guerilla warfare was strong and had struck terror among many of the Indonesian natives. Many innocent people had been tortured and their bodies cut to pieces. The Dutch troops were sent in to establish peace and prevent murder in this part of the country. This took a great deal of hard work and sweat, and sometimes it took lives.

Our Dutch troops were stationed in the interior of Java when the fatal patrol took place. There were 10 of us who had been taken from different squadrons.

One night our patrol slipped silently out of camp, dark shadowy figures dressed in green camouflage fatigues. The wind was in our favor as we slunk through the countryside and passed the *kampongs* (villages); the *kampong* dogs couldn't detect us. Occasionally

the moon would glide out from between the clouds, lighting our way. Fireflies, too, kept us company.

God is in control

A million thoughts ran through my mind. *What would this patrol hold in store? Could killing be avoided? How could we protect ourselves from death and also prevent the senseless slaying of so many Javanese?*

In my mind I could hear my mother's words when I was a young child: *John, don't ever forget — whatever happens, you are taken care of. God is in control and Jesus saves.* It was as if she were standing beside me saying those words as I moved on.

No one spoke until we arrived, without serious incident, at the crossroads which was our destination.

Klaas, our commander, whispered out his orders as we all split up into separate groups. In my group of three, Ralph was the Bren gun commander, I was

the Bren gun operator and Sikke was my assistant. We had to remain at the crossroads and defend it.

Klaas would lead Andries, Hansie and some other men back to search the *kampong*. If they ran into trouble they would shoot up a flare. As Klaas left he whispered over his shoulder, "The third platoon is also on night patrol tonight but they're guarding a different area. I don't think we will run into them."

Shattered night

All was quiet after the others faded into the night. There we were, three vulnerable, tense human beings, tiny dots on the landscape, watching, waiting, constantly on the alert.

Fifteen minutes; half an hour; an hour passed, seeming to stretch on forever. Suddenly the tropical night was shattered by automatic rifle fire coming from where the rest of our squad had disappeared. Every nerve in our bodies tightened. "What was happening?" Then we could clearly hear a Bren gun splitting the night air.

"Watch for a flare!" Ralph said. And there it was, lighting up the night sky. "Pack up, men," he whispered, "We've got to move to where our help is needed."

Suddenly he paused, holding up his hand. "Be ready, someone is coming."

A shadowy figure emerged. It was Klaas. He had blood on his hands and seemed shaken.

The rest of the squad had been searching the *kampong*. Klaas told us, when, turning a corner, they had come upon the enemy. They had opened fire and the enemy had responded.

Klaas continued, "Their aim was dead on and some of my men were hit. We could have all been killed."

"Are you sure it was the enemy you fired on?" asked Ralph. "The third platoon is out there too."

Klaas went silent for a few moments. "I don't think so," he said, "but I'm not positive. We couldn't make out faces; it was too dark. Besides, the third platoon isn't in this area."

Ralph suggested we send up a flare to see if someone would respond. A flare answered ours, coming from where Klaas had just come.

Discovering a disaster

"Let's move," Klaas said, "We've got to get closer."

I had a very loud voice so Ralph asked me to call out to find out who was there. I called; we waited. We could hear someone answer but weren't able to make out what they were saying. After a few minutes I called again. This time we could clearly hear the reply: "We can hear you; this is the third platoon."

We were relieved to know we weren't meeting the enemy. But an overwhelming sense of grief settled over us. What had happened? Had our army been fighting itself? What would be in store for us when we reached the scene of the surprise encounter?

When we reached the spot where the fighting had erupted we saw our men. Bouke had superficial wounds, but Dick's knee was shattered and he was in a great deal of pain.

Simon, who was Ambonese and our interpreter, had even more serious injuries. He had taken most of the Bren gun fire. When the firing started he had told himself: *This is it, but they won't get me alive.* He had taken a hand grenade from his belt, pulled out the pin and had grimly waited for the enemy to proceed.

It took a great deal of effort on our part to pry the grenade out of Simon's clenched hand; finally the grenade was thrown

far out into a rice field where it exploded harmlessly. When our camp heard the explosion they dispatched help immediately.

Heinse and Herder, two men from our company, were sent to meet the men from camp halfway.

Klaas's injuries healed quite quickly. Bouke's wounds took longer. But Simon could not be helped; he died the following day. The day after that, we gathered together as friends and brothers and offered our last salute at a funeral service for him. Simon had been a good friend and soldier; we felt honored to have him as one of our squad.

Dick was sent back to Holland to recuperate, but his leg continued to cause him a great deal of pain. Finally, 25 years later, still in pain, Dick agreed with the doctors' decision to amputate his leg.

After 48 years, the tragedy of that fatal patrol is still vivid in my mind. It makes me realize how fragile life is. And it reminds me of this verse:

*Our life is often filled with pain,
and death looms just ahead:
But Jesus' cross can give us peace
And take away the dread.*

John Hiemstra was in Indonesia from 1945 to 1948. He is the only one alive today from his Bren gun unit. He lives in Telkwa, B.C.



John Hiemstra today with Ralph's dog.

Please take advantage of our monthly Business Directory (see p. 15 of this issue). For the low cost of \$25 you can advertise your business.

Feature

Motherhood without apple pie

Johannes Deviet

During all the millennia since Adam, the "church" has, time and time again, misused her power and authority by being abusive. Perhaps we can find someone to write about the kind of abuse she or he experienced. If we do find such a person, I'll gladly augment that story by telling of the abuse by the church that I have experienced. It caused me to live in exile for more than 20 years.

But what I want to talk about now is not the church as *perpetrator* but as *victim* of abuse.

Let me tell you what started me on this subject. A few weeks ago, I read an ad in an advertising paper which read as follows:

"CHURCH WANTED, old fashioned kind, Jer.6:16, whose appeal is not to those who hold to the popular beliefs of the day, but who believe the old time religion is good enough; who believe the truth matters, that the blood of the martyrs was not shed in vain and who feel that the transforming power of real Christianity is largely absent today; where there is preaching about the things people least want to hear, namely the nature of sin and God's view and remedy of it; where Jesus Christ and the cross are exalted as our only hope, remedy and happiness; based on Reformed Baptist principles, old gospel hymn singing and where the King James Bible is still used. Call John...."

It is my strong conviction that an ad like this, calling for a made-to-measure church, embodies virtually all the abuse a person can heap on the church. To me that ad is the culmination of all the wrongful, individualistic actions and thinking the church has been subjected to in our age.

Mother wanted

I can in my mind already hear the objections my musing will evoke. "Does this John not have the right to look for a church which exactly fills his needs and meets his requirements? Is not the church, after all, a voluntary institution which may conduct its business any way she sees fit?"

Let me start to counter these arguments by composing an ad of my own. Here it is:

"MOTHER WANTED; may be good-looking, but not beautiful or sexy; able to hum old-



"You don't find a mother, you are born to or adopted by her. You do not find the church and then join her, you are born to or adopted by her."

time tunes but not contemporary ones; will be expected to prepare old-fashioned meals of solid nutritional value on a coal and wood stove. Call John...."

You may have noticed that I use female pronouns for the church in this reflection. At one time this was always done. The church, as the Bride of Christ (Rev.22:17), was depicted as female. If memory serves me right, it was Bishop Cyprian (he died in A.D. 258) who said or wrote, "It is impossible to have God as Father if you don't have the church as mother." The great Reformer John Calvin, who is rightly regarded as the father of the Reformed faith, quoted this statement with approval.

If this statement is true, as I believe it to be, John's ad looking for a church is just as silly as mine calling for a mother. You don't *find* a mother, you are *born* to or *adopted* by her. You do not *find* the church and then join her, you are *born* to or

adopted by her.

If your parents were Christians, they belonged to the church, raised you in the faith, and at some point in your life you realized that you were not only born to your parents, but also to the church. If you were not raised in the faith, the Lord caused you to hear the church's message — from one of her members — at some point in your life. Through the working of God's Spirit you not only heard, but also believed, and mother church promptly adopted you as one of her children.

Catholic church

I admit that at this point our thinking necessarily gets a little bit muddled. How can we reconcile the ideal of a *holy catholic church*, our mother, with the reality of the present plethora of denominations? A footnote to the Apostle's Creed, which can be found in the *Psalter Hymnal* of the Christian

Reformed Church (page 813) claims that the emphasized words mean "the true Christian church of all times and places." In our minds we might translate these straightforward words as "all congregations formed by true Christians."

I, for one, am very thankful that our church decided to maintain the word "catholic" in its confessions. Some years ago, I shocked my Grade 5 or 6 church school class by telling them that I was catholic, and throughout the years when people asked me, "Are you catholic?" I have usually said, Yes, without always taking the trouble to explain what that word means to me.

In spite of the Catholic/Orthodox split of some 900 years ago, and in spite of the Catholic/Protestant separation of nearly 500 years ago, we must recognize the *holy catholic church* as the mother to whom all Christians are born. In that basic unity we may rejoice.

The reality of the divisions must sadden us.

We do find reasons for joy in our time: the trend toward reconciliation between Roman Catholic and Orthodox; the reforms taking place in the Roman Catholic Church to the point where, I am told, some R.C. parishes are more evangelical than their Protestant neighbors; the readiness of churches of different "denominations" (what a horrible word!) to recognize each other as part of the church of Christ.

Divisive trends

We also find reasons for sorrow and self-examination: We all too readily give up on the church to which we belong — even a small, personal clash might trigger an exit. We tend to equate our interpretation of some text with the Bible itself. We elevate ethnic traditions to issues of doctrine, on the one hand, and we minimize real differences, on the other.

A trend that really troubles me is the drift toward "nondenominational" and "independent" churches, and parachurch organizations carrying some person's name. This evidences a worrisome disrespect for the *holy catholic church*. It abuses her, and it makes light of the unity of believers for which Christ fervently prayed.

There is another side to this coin, too: Are we too rigid in imposing church order and confessional requirements so that some people or groups almost feel forced to leave us? The rather large inner-city congregation to which I belong, sometimes finds it impossible to stick closely to the rules of our church order if it wants to do its ministry properly.

I wonder about two more things: If the church were better at lovingly embracing her children, thus causing them to experience the motherhood of the *holy catholic church*, would so many people claiming to be Christians yet stay out in the cold? And would our feminist sisters still feel the need to address God the Father as God the Mother? Or is this a totally different can of worms?

Johannes Deviet is an elder in First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ont., who enjoys writing reflections in his church's monthly newsletter.

Advice

Christian Reformed community should provide alternatives to drinking

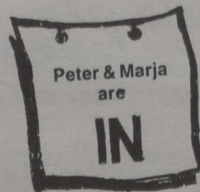
Dear P & M:

Your column about drinking ("Stop the Trend", June 9, 1995) was right on. I grew up in a Christian Reformed community in the Western U.S. All my relatives and most of my friends' parents felt it best to avoid alcohol. That meant no alcohol at family get-togethers or weddings. A small glass of wine might be served at Christmas, but even then most of my family abstained. I feel that this non-alcoholic environment was a big advantage for my cousins, friends and me since it kept us away from the drinking scene.

I wish I could pass this advantage on to my children. I married a Canadian CRC guy, however, and we now live in Canada where alcohol is served at almost all our family gatherings. My husband supports my position on alcohol up to a point, but his family and our church community do not. While I continue to abstain, I don't dare to "make a stink" about it.

Looking back I now realize that my parents also kept a strict eye on who our friends were and what kinds of things we did together. My dad's philosophy was that we should get involved with things at school and hold down a part-time job. So we joined band, choir, sports, yearbook committees and young people's groups. Some might say that my parents were too strict, but I'm glad that they cared enough to protect us during the teen years. Most of us did not rebel against this kind of upbringing; I feel that we're better people for it today.

I agree with you when you wrote that "it's time for a major change of attitude about drinking in the Reformed community." The older generation should model some different standards, and the CRC community should provide alternative activities so that drinking is not such a temptation.



Dear Keep Them Busy:

With all the talk about the effect of peer pressure on teens, the older generation conveniently overlooks the fact that many of us buckle under community pressure, too. Too many folks reassure each other that teenage drinking is "just a phase" and that all of us made it through. So we continue to act as if a party is not really a party unless the alcohol flows, while simultaneously being genuinely concerned when our young people include drinking at their own events.

Your letter shows that community and family standards can have a positive impact on the development of the younger generation. With respect to drinking we prefer parents to be too strict rather than too lenient. We thank the Lord for every young people's society and league which works hard at providing good fun for our youth. Your dad's philosophy was "right on," too.

Dear P & M:

For 20 years my husband and I prayed desperately for our son's heart to be changed. His alcohol and drug addictions finally brought him to the point where he began to contemplate suicide. Then, according to God's timing, he was ready to accept help.

Our family doctor had repeatedly tried to get him into "Teen Challenge." Finally he went.

Two months later he wrote to tell us that he had asked the Lord Jesus to take over his life. At first we were skeptical. But the miracle has really happened! He now sings in the Teen Challenge choir which accompanies speakers at various church services. He is now also willing to pray with us. Who would have believed this even a year ago?

We were surprised that you did not mention Teen Challenge in your June 9 article about alcoholism. Their staff is wonderful and absolutely dedicated. God has used this ministry for



young men; it has changed many lives. The only prerequisite for entry is that you have to be an addicted person who wants to change his life. No doctor's referral is required. Their success rate is double that of other institutions. We wish that the Christian Reformed Church would support them financially.

Dear Teen Challenge:

You're right. We should have mentioned this organization. Some of their young men have presented their testimonies in our church, so we are aware of the life-changing ministry of Teen Challenge. In fact, we are negotiating to have some of their speakers or choir come again this winter.

While it is called Teen Challenge, the Teen Challenge Farm is a residential program that offers men aged 16 to 40 freedom

from drug and alcohol dependence. Their address is: Teen Challenge Farm, P.O. Box 777, Lambeth, Ontario, N0L 1S0. Telephone: 1-519-652-0777.

We are thrilled with you that the Lord has used this program to turn your son's life around. With David you can now exclaim: "I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit ... He put a new song in my mouth" (Ps. 40:1-3).

Write to: Peter and Marja Slofstra, 16 Kimbermount Drive, St. Catharines, ON, L2N 5V6

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Wivoeet.



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			Personal Attention: CRC Pastors Would you like to preach in Nova Scotia? If you're travelling/vacationing in Eastern Canada, please consider doing the Chr. Ref. Church in Kentville, N.S. , a big favor! Please contact Gerrit Tenyenhuus at (902) 538-9533.	Personal ONE TO ANOTHER Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2
	Anniversaries 1955 October 21 1995 It is with great pride and thankfulness to God that we celebrate our parents' 40th wedding anniversary PETER and GRACE DOORNBOS (nee TOLKAMP) Our love and deepest appreciation for all you have done. Hugs and kisses from your grandchildren. Charles & Connie Doombos Laura, Melanie, Natalie Diane & Brian McGill Julia, Andrea Susan & Tim Vanden Bosch Luke, Justin, Ben Patricia Doombos	Krabbendyke Woodstock 1945 October 25 1995 "For the Lord in His mercy will lead them" (Is.49:10b). With praise and thankfulness to God we announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents, TONY and CORRIE VAN RHEENEN (nee COK) We thank the Lord for His love and guidance in their lives and pray that He will continue to bless their future together. Congratulations and love from: Margie & Bill De Jong Paul & Kathryn, Scott & Patsy (Jesse), Duane & Christine, Michelle Edith & Dave Spooner Rhonda, Troy, Jennice, Tyrone, Julian Peter & Karen Van Rheenen Mindy, Andrea Margaret & Roger Young Sylvia & Andre Hooghiem Michael, Jeremy, Bradley, Nicole We invite you to celebrate with us at an open house on Saturday, Oct. 28, 1995, D.V. from 2-4 p.m., at the John Knox Chr. School, Juliana Drive, Woodstock, Ont. Best wishes only please. Home address: 159 John Davies Drive, Woodstock, ON N4T 1N1	Church News Christian Reformed Church Change in worship time: — Community Chr. Ref. Church of Richmond Hill, Ont., has changed its morning worship service time to 10 a.m. (from 10:30 a.m.). The evening service continues to be held at 6 p.m.	For Sale For sale: Galanti Digital Classical Organ. 2 manuals; 32-note pedal, 22-stops. Suitable for home or small church. \$5,000.00 firm. Optional external speaker cabinet extra. Call (519) 688-3540 for information.
	1970 October 22 1995 "He will cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you will find refuge. His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart" (Ps.91:4). We thank God, who in His faithfulness has kept you, our dear friends, together JOHN and JUDY SMIDSTRA-VANDENBERG We pray that His care and keeping may continue to bind your hearts, minds and spirits in the next phase of your marriage journey. We love and appreciate you for all you are among us — your friends at Zion Chr. Ref. Church. An invitation is extended to attend a "Come and go tea" at John and Judy's home on Sunday, Oct. 22, 1995, from 1-5 p.m. If you can't make it, your thoughts and prayers would be valued. Address: 342 Park Rd. North, Oshawa, ON L1J 4M3 Tel. (905) 723-6536		Anniversaries	Anniversaries
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			Congratulations to Tony and Corrie Van Rheenen (nee Cok) on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary!	

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Job Opportunities

Job Opportunities

Job Opportunities

Miscellaneous

Job Opportunities

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Lacombe Chr. School is a school of 340 students serving Grades K-9. The school is located in the town of Lacombe, midway between Edmonton and Calgary.

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Please send resume, statement of education philosophy and other pertinent information prior to **November 24, 1995**, to:

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Please address a letter of application, together with a resume and references to:

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Events	Events	Events	Events	Miscellaneous
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For research paper guidelines and further information, request the *Meeter Award Brochure** from: The H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, 3201 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 USA • 616-957-7081

**Brochures have also been sent to high schools associated with Christian Schools International.*

Deadline for completed papers: January 15, 1996.

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Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

*Oct. 14 Andre Knevel in concert, with the "Mattaniah Male Choir," 8 p.m., Chalmers United Church, Woodstock, Ont. Tickets/Info.: (519) 468-2031.

Oct. 14 CPI conferences: "Alternatives, Voices of Hope in a Climate of Despair" in Edmonton, Alta., and "Mapping Ontario's Political Future" in Toronto, Ont. Info.: 1-800-667-8046.

Oct. 14 Trumpet and organ recital, by Michael Ohnimus (trumpet) and Lucas Chorosinski (organ), 8 p.m., Mountainview CRC, Grimsby, Ont.

*Oct. 14 "The Netherlands Bazaar," 10 a.m.-10 p.m., at the Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave., Thornhill, Ont. Don't miss this exciting event! Info.: Ge Spaans (905) 477-1243.

*Oct. 14 Organist Willem van Suydam in concert, with "Sursum Corda Male Choir," 8 p.m., First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.

Oct. 17 CLAC public meeting, 8 p.m., Clarkson CRC, Mississauga, Ont. Speaker: David Richardson, director African Enterprise, on "South Africa's Lessons for Canada." Info.: (905) 670-7383 or 277-9112.

Oct. 20 Dessert evening sponsored by Waterloo CRC's "The Gathering" and the Huron Campus Ministry. Invited speakers: members of the Toronto AWARE chapter. Dessert at 7:30 p.m., meeting at 8 p.m., CRC, Waterloo, Ont. Info.: (519) 886-1298.

*Oct. 20-21 "In Concert" presented by organist Willem van Suydam. Oct. 20: 8 p.m., First CRC, Barrie, Ont., with "Crusaders Male Choir." Oct. 21: 8 p.m., First CRC, Holland Marsh, Ont., with "Crusaders Male Choir." Info.: (905) 455-0797.

*Oct. 21 Andre Knevel in concert, with the "Mattaniah Male Choir" and the "Hosanna Choir," 7:45 p.m., Melrose United Church, Hamilton, Ont. Info.: (905) 648-3170/6585.

*Oct. 21 A day of training and encouragement for deacons and caregivers at John Knox Chr. School, Brampton, Ont. From 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Theme: "Deacons: The Link." Over 30 workshops to choose from. Cost: \$35. Contact your deacons for pre-registration or call Diaconal Ministries at (905) 646-4511.

*Oct. 21 "Puzzled about the Call to Ministry?" - a one-day seminar, sponsored by Calvin Theological Seminary and the Ancaster CRC. From 8 a.m.-4 p.m. at the CRC, Ancaster, Ont. For info. contact Rev. B. De Jonge at (905) 648-2323.

Oct. 21 CLAC's fall conference, 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., at the CLAC head office, 5920 Atlantic Dr., Mississauga, Ont. Morning: "How do we negotiate Christianly," a simulated collective bargaining session. Afternoon: special guest speaker Dr. Albert Wolters. Visitors welcome. Info.: (905) 670-7383.

Oct. 22 Combined Reformation Day worship service, 6:45 p.m., Saunders Secondary School, 941 Viscount Rd., London, Ont. Speaker: Ref. John D. Hellinga on "Walking in the Light of God." Info.: (519) 457-5619.

*Oct. 24 Organist Andre Knevel plays works by Bach, Frank, Widor, also improvisations. At 8 p.m., Cathedral of St. Catharine, Church St., St. Catharines, Ont. Info.: (905) 684-3964.

Oct. 24 Organ/trumpet concert by organist Wm. Vandertuin and trumpet virtuoso Steven Pettes, 8 p.m., Grace Anglican (West & Albion), Brantford, Ont. Collection only.

Oct. 26 Shalom Manor Annual Volunteer Appreciation Day, with guest speaker Rev. Henry R. De Bolster. Registration at 9 a.m. Info.: (905) 945-9631.

*Oct. 27 Andre Knevel in concert with the choirs "Soli Deo Gloria" and "Sursum Corda," also improvisations and audience singing, 8 p.m., Rehoboth Can. Ref. Church, Burlington, Ont. Info.: (905) 689-8600.

*Oct. 27 Organist Willem van Suydam in concert, with the "Reformed Church Choir," 8 p.m., Grace Ref. Church, Dunnville, Ont. Info.: (905) 455-0797.

*Oct. 28 Organist Willem van Suydam in concert, with the "Georgetown Performance Children's Choir," 8 p.m., Second CRC, Brampton, Ont. Info.: (905) 455-0797.

Oct. 28 Christian Rainbows-sponsored special meeting at the CRC, Ingersoll, Ont. Speaker: Rev. Hennessey, director of a special (inter-church) chaplaincy project for the long-term mentally ill. Pre-reg. required \$7.00. Info.: (905) 639-1075 or (519) 631-0307.

Oct. 28 Giant bazaar, Trinity Chr. School, Burlington, Ont. Doors open at 10 a.m. Auction starts at 6 p.m. Everyone welcome!

News

Can the 'Toronto Blessing' help the CRC?

Robert VanderVennen

SCARBOROUGH, Ont. — Many individual members of the Christian Reformed Church in southern Ontario have attended evening services at the airport Vineyard church, where people have experienced what the media call the "Toronto Blessing." Can this church offer something to Christian Reformed congregations?

Grace CRC in Scarborough, Ont., explored this recently by inviting Rev. Steve Long, a pastor at the airport Vineyard, to lead its annual fall retreat.

Long was invited at the initiative of Grace CRC's pastor, Rev. John Rottman. The church was invited to prepare itself for the spirit of "renewal" for which the airport Vineyard has become world famous.

Scarborough's pastor at the Vineyard

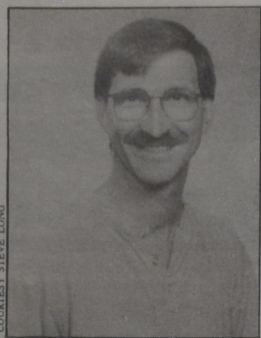
Rottman attended a Vineyard service along with his research professor at the University of Toronto. They sat in the back row, and though Rottman guardedly went forward for prayer at the end of the service, he was determined not to get involved with the "manifestations" he had heard about. But after a member of the Vineyard's prayer team prayed with him, he lost the power to stand up and went down on the floor.

Rottman says he then had a feeling of confirmation that everything he had been taught about God was really true. Subsequently, he felt a real hunger for Scripture, and his devotional life has greatly improved. He invited Long to his church in the hope that the church could have a special experience of God's presence and of the intimacy with God that he experienced.

Long was formerly the pastor of a Fellowship Baptist congregation and said his attitude and experience the first time he went to the airport Vineyard were almost identical to Rottman's. Long winsomely described the Vineyard ministry, identifying what has drawn him to serve as one of the pastors in the church that now has more than 50 staff members.

Not explaining or defending

During his presentations Long made no effort to defend what goes on at his church, nor to recommend those practices to



Rev. Steve Long

others. He admitted that he certainly doesn't understand a great deal of what happens.

Long said that the church had been functioning for about six years when at a service in January 1994, people began to fall to the floor, some beginning to laugh or cry uncontrollably. Such things are not common in the other 500 churches in the Vineyard group, of which about 50 are in Canada, including one in downtown Toronto.

Long relates this unusual activity to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on believers at Pen-

tecost and afterwards. He sees clear evidence of the gifts of the Spirit in those touched at the services — gifts like wisdom, insight, discernment and encouragement. People feel the presence of God, and with it joy and dedication unlike they've experienced before.

Most people who come to the airport Vineyard are Christians, but it is common for non-Christians to make commitments to Christ at the services. People do not generally join the Vineyard church after their experience there, nor is that encouraged. In fact, Long says the church itself is somewhat decreasing in size.

In the past 20 months about 500,000 people from all over the world have attended these evening services. This Vineyard church has become the largest patron of the big hotels on the airport strip, and Long told some great stories of experiences at the hotels.

To its credit the church does not feature "superstars" on its staff, and the staff includes people who have come from many denominations. The senior pastor is Rev. John Arnot.

For the second day of the church retreat Long was asked to speak about the Vineyard's experience of physical healing. He said that is not a major ministry of the church, since only about once a week are people invited to come forward to pray for healing. The church makes no promises of healing, and many people who are prayed for seem not to be healed at all. But there are also many quite dramatic stories of healing.

Christ still has compassion

Though down-playing the healing ministry, Long said, "I believe that God heals today out of mercy and compassion." If you look at the Bible texts that describe healing, Long continued, most state that Jesus was "filled with compassion." Healing takes place because of the faith of the person healed. The purpose of healing is that God is to be praised and glorified. "Has God stopped wanting Jesus to be glorified?" asked Long.

Healing at the Vineyard often doesn't look pretty, said Long. "When I pray that God will heal

someone I don't usually have the assurance that God will heal that person," he said. Yet the Bible commands us, "Pray for each other that you may be healed." Long spent a great deal of time showing that the practices and results seen at the airport Vineyard are directly connected to the Bible.

The "blessing" of the airport Vineyard church is an internal blessing. Persons so blessed have the responsibility of using their blessing in communal and public ways as well as privately. Experiencing this blessing of God is an outpouring of the Spirit, says Long. He says he is not able to explain it, nor does he try to explain or defend what happens at his church. "Can you allow for God to do things differently, and in ways you can't understand?" he asks.

At the end of the retreat Grace CRC members indicated a consensus that their church will now need to decide to what extent and in what ways it will wish to welcome the Spirit, recognizing that the Spirit may work in ways the church may not be able to understand or control.

Christian faith encourages doctor to stop doing abortions

JACKSON, Miss. (EP) — When Dr. Beverly McMillan speaks against abortion, she's giving an expert opinion. In the mid-1970s, McMillan was medical director of a Mississippi abortion clinic.

"I first ran into abortion in 1969 when I was working at Cook County Hospital in Chicago," says McMillan. "I spent six months there as part of my OB/GYN rotation from the Mayo Clinic, where I was trained. Six weeks of that rotation was spent on the 'infected OB' ward, and it turned out that what I was doing was taking care of incomplete abortions from back alley abortionists."

McMillan explains that illegal abortionists would begin the abortion process, breaking the woman's water and perhaps beginning to remove the unborn child. Then the woman would be told to report to the emergency room for care, and there the partial abortion would be completed. McMillan saw 15-20 such patients a night.

"They came in scared and ashamed, and I thought at the time there must be a better way

to handle this," recalls McMillan, who was raised Catholic but has abandoned her faith. That experience made it easy for her to decide to work at an abortion clinic when one opened in her town in 1975.

"I didn't mind doing it until I got saved," she says. "In 1976 everything in my life seemed to be going well, but I was miserable. When I had tried everything else, I decided to try God again."

She continues, "I started reading the Bible, and as I was reading the Bible I started getting more uncomfortable doing abortions. I eventually started going to church. It was a Protestant church that didn't particularly talk against abortion, but I felt after a while that the Holy Spirit was saying 'Choose you this day whom you will serve.' I decided to serve the Lord, and resigned from the clinic in 1978."

McMillan says she wasn't pro-life at the time, but simply felt unable to continue performing abortions. After another two years, she became involved in the pro-life movement.

Trading one big problem for another

McMillan continues to operate a private OB/GYN practice, and is now an occasional pro-life speaker. She recalls, "I just ignored the babies when I was doing abortions. I knew it was human but it didn't matter. But doing abortions the way I was taught to do them I had to reconstruct the pieces later to be sure I had done a complete abortion. I could always find all the parts. There would be two arms, two legs. These are human bodies. I can certainly affirm the humanity of the unborn baby."

Though abortion may sometimes seem like a way out of a bad situation, McMillan says, "Women who have abortions are trading in one problem for a much bigger one. I think abortions damage people. They damage the babies, obviously, but they also damage women and men. I think we're raising up a generation of children who are basically abortion survivors, and as such have a real difficult time being civilized. Why

should they care about the greater community of humankind, when their own parents could have killed them?"

McMillan hopes her pro-life speaking will be an encouragement for those who oppose abortion. "People are often a little surprised about some of the things that go on in abortion clinics. I like to think that people who have not given it a great deal of thought will be motivated to work to get abortions out of our societies."

She concludes, "It can be wearying working in the pro-life movement day after day when there doesn't appear to be much progress. But there are conversion stories, and God is at work."

Thinkbit

"We read that we are to forgive our enemies, but we do not read that we ought to forgive our friends."

Said by Cosima de Medici
(1389-1464)